

RECOGNIZING THE 35TH ANNIVERSARY OF TURKEY'S ILLEGAL INVASION OF CYPRUS

**HON. FRANK PALLONE, JR.**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, July 20, 2009*

Mr. PALLONE. Madam Speaker, tonight I join my colleagues on the House floor to commemorate the somber 35th anniversary of Turkey's illegal occupation of Cyprus.

On July 20, 1974, Turkey began its brutal invasion of Cyprus, which forced nearly 200,000 Greek Cypriots to flee their homes—making one-third of the Cypriot population refugees in their own country.

Today, Turkey occupies the northern third of the island. It is one of the most militarized areas in the world, with more than 43,000 Turkish soldiers trying to maintain the status quo of the illegal occupation.

The U.S. must do our part to nurture steps towards a united Cyprus. As a member of the Hellenic Caucus, I have joined many of my colleagues in calling on the Administration and the Department of State to urge Turkey to demonstrate that it has the political will necessary for constructive negotiations. A successful settlement effort must take on ground realities into consideration: the two Cypriot communities have a history of living peacefully together. A solution will be a reunified Cyprus that is a bi-zonal and bi-communal federation.

A solution must flow out of the interests of the Cypriots themselves. It is the Turkish Government that needs to show a genuine interest in resolving the dispute. It is in Ankara that leadership must be taken to signal to Turkish Cypriots that they can be free to negotiate a solution. Removal of thousands of Turkish troops from Cyprus is essential to that solution.

When Cypriots were forced to flee their homes 35 years ago, a large number of their properties were unlawfully distributed to tens of thousands of illegal settlers from Turkey. Today, 35 years later, Greek Cypriots, who continue to own these properties, are prevented by Turkey from returning and enjoying their homes and properties.

This past April, the European Court of Justice, ECJ, ruled that the judgment of a court in the Republic of Cyprus must be recognized and enforced by all other EU-member states even if it concerns land situated in the Turkish-occupied areas of Cyprus.

The ECJ landmark ruling reaffirms the territorial integrity of the Republic of Cyprus and once again upholds the undeniable right of all Greek-Cypriots: That they remain the sole owners of properties that were illegally stripped from them.

It is an outrage that approximately 5,000 Cypriot-Americans who own property in the occupied area, but who have no legal recourse. Since Cypriot-Americans cannot return to their illegally-seized property, I believe they should be allowed to seek financial remedies with either the current inhabitants of their land or the Turkish Government itself.

Last Congress, I introduced the bipartisan American Owned Property in Occupied Cyprus Claims Act. Through this legislation, Americans who are being denied access to their property and even their ancestral homes will finally be able to seek restitution. I will once again introduce a similar bill.

While there are many difficulties, hopeful signs of progress do exist. There is ongoing integration that takes place between Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots as a result of the nearly 13 million crossings along the cease-fire line that have occurred over the last five years.

Madam Speaker, as we commemorate the 35th anniversary of Turkey's illegal invasion and occupation of Cyprus, I remain hopeful a united Cyprus can become a reality.

RECALLING THE THIRTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE TURKISH INVASION OF CYPRUS

**HON. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, July 20, 2009*

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recall the tragic anniversary of the Turkish invasion of Cyprus that occurred on July 20, 1974.

Thirty-five years ago, Turkey attacked the Republic of Cyprus. Tragically, the legacy of that brutal act—43,000 Turkish occupation troops on Cypriot soil—continues to this day. Turkish troops, in blatant disregard for the Rule of Law and the basic rights of the Cypriot people, continue to illegally divide the island into two areas. As a result, the Republic of Cyprus is one of the most militarized areas in the world.

I strongly urge both sides to fully comply with the guiding principles of the July 8, 2006 agreement. This agreement sought to establish working groups to operate together to reunify Cyprus into one bizonal, bicommunal federation. Since September 3, 2008, the leaders of the two communities have held more than 35 rounds of direct talks and those talks are continuing regularly. The July 8 agreement is an important achievement that has given both parties the framework to work toward a permanently unified and free Cyprus.

I commend the opening of Ledra Street in Nicosia that occurred on April 3, 2008 and the recent agreement between the Turkish and Cypriot leaders to open the Limnitis crossing point to Kokkina. These are positive steps toward realizing the goals of the July 8 agreement and toward liberating the Cypriot people.

While the international community may certainly support the Cypriot and Turkish leaders as they work toward a solution, the solution to the illegal occupation of Cyprus must be solved by the Cypriots themselves and any solution must serve the interests of the people of Cyprus. A solution cannot be imposed by outside parties or subject to arbitrary timelines.

Madam Speaker, I remain committed to the goal of a united and free Cyprus. After thirty-five years of illegal occupation, the Cypriot people deserve to be free from division and oppression at last.

REGARDING FURTHER SENATE PROCEEDINGS IN THE SAMUEL KENT IMPEACHMENT MATTER

**HON. BOB GOODLATTE**

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, July 20, 2009*

Mr. GOODLATTE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to support this resolution urging the Senate to end further proceedings to remove Samuel Kent from his judicial office.

On June 18, 2009, the House of Representatives overwhelmingly voted to impeach Judge Samuel Kent by adopting four, separate articles of impeachment without a single "no" vote.

This House vote was the result of (1) a thorough investigation into Judge Kent's misconduct by the House Judiciary Committee's Task Force on Judicial Impeachment, (2) an investigatory hearing on the matter; (3) a Task Force meeting at which it made a formal recommendation to the full Judiciary Committee that Judge Kent should be impeached, and (4) a full Committee markup of the articles of impeachment.

Indeed, the evidence clearly showed that Judge Kent's misconduct merited the serious step of impeachment. Judge Kent lied to the FBI and DOJ about the nature of his sexual misconduct with court employees. In addition, he pled guilty to felony obstruction of justice and to committing repeated acts of non-consensual sexual contact with court employees. He was sentenced to 33 months in prison for committing felony obstruction of justice, and on Monday, June 15th, he reported to prison and began his prison term.

However, because the Constitution provides that federal judges are appointed for life, Samuel Kent, despite the fact that he was sitting in prison, continued to collect his taxpayer-funded salary of approximately \$174,000 per year, continued to collect his taxpayer-funded health insurance benefits, and continued to accrue his taxpayer-funded pension.

Citizens of the U.S. have a right to a fair and impartial judiciary. The House vote to impeach Judge Samuel Kent sent the strong message to all federal judges that the House of Representatives will carry out its Constitutional duty to root out abuses of power in the federal judiciary.

After the June 18th vote, the Senate began preparations for trial to convict Kent and remove him from office. On June 30, 2009, facing a public trial in the Senate, Judge Kent finally resigned from office. As a result of the swift action by the House and Senate, Samuel Kent is no longer a federal judge and he will no longer collect his taxpayer-funded salary or benefits while sitting in federal prison, nor will he do so after his release.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Adam Schiff, the chairman of the Task Force on Judicial Impeachment, for his leadership in this effort, along with all the Members of the Task Force on both sides of the aisle. As Ranking Member of the Impeachment Task Force, I appreciate the fact that this effort has been undertaken in an extremely bipartisan fashion. I would also like to thank Chairman CONYERS and Ranking Member SMITH for their comprehensive, yet expeditious and bipartisan consideration of the articles of impeachment in the full Judiciary Committee.